



**Office of the Attorney General
Paul G. Summers**

NEWS RELEASE

Office of the Attorney General at
P.O. Box 20207 Nashville, TN 37202-0207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dec. 11, 2001
Number #01-20

CONTACT:
Sharon Curtis-Flair
(615) 741-5860

FEDERAL JUDGE DISMISSES REDISTRICTING LAWSUIT

The federal district court in Memphis has dismissed a redistricting lawsuit filed by a group of voters. The plaintiffs sought to compel the Tennessee General Assembly to speed up its redistricting of the state legislative and congressional districts in Tennessee for the upcoming 2002 elections. The plaintiffs claimed that they were entitled under the Due Process Clause of the federal Constitution to 90 days notice of the new district lines prior to the April 4 qualifying deadline for the August, 2002 primary election. Such a time deadline would have required the legislature to adopt new plans by Jan. 5, 2001.

The State filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit, arguing no court has ever recognized a federal constitutional right to 90 days' notice of the new district lines prior to a qualifying deadline. Federal Judge Bernice Donald agreed to dismiss the case on those grounds, noting that the plaintiffs had failed "to articulate [in their complaint] any judicially cognizable injury to a federal right."

Tennessee Attorney General Paul G. Summers stated "I'm pleased with the federal court's prompt dismissal of this lawsuit. I'm also confident the General Assembly will go about its duty to adopt new redistricting plans in a timely fashion."

To obtain a copy of the Court's opinion, contact the Tennessee Attorney General's Office at (615) 741-5860.